

Hope in Perilous Times, Part 2 - Acts 20:4-6 – May 10th, 2009

- Last week, we began a series titled; “Hope in Perilous Times.” The reason for this is because of what we have recorded in Acts 20.
- I’m of the belief that the Holy Spirit wants to connect some dots between the information in this chapter, and the application to our lives.
- It’s not so much “that” the early church faced perilous times, it’s “how” the early church faced perilous times, that can give us hope.

1. Be Encouraged (Verses 1-2)

- Paul sets out for Macedonia after encouraging the disciples, then speaks “many words of encouragement to the people,” in that area.

2. Be Patient (Verse 3a)

- Here Paul patiently stays in Greece for three months because of a plot against him, and during this time he writes the book of Romans.
- Even more interestingly, we read about how depressed he was during this three month period in his letters to the church of Corinth.

3. Be Prudent (Verse 3b)

- After a three month delay, Paul prudently decides to back through Macedonia instead of going to Syria. He’s not paranoid, he’s prudent.

4. Be Together (Verses 4-5)

4 He was accompanied by Sopater son of Pyrrhus from Berea, Aristarchus and Secundus from Thessalonica, Gaius from Derbe, Timothy also, and Tychicus and Trophimus from the province of Asia. 5 **These men went on ahead and waited** for us at Troas.

- v4 We have a list of men that accompany Paul and they seem to be from different churches like Berea, Thessalonica, Derbe, and Asia.
- v5 These men go on ahead and wait in Troas for the Apostle to arrive. Again, why does the Holy Spirit have Luke record this detail?
- I believe the main reason for this is because they needed to be together and stay together, if for no other reason, it was for their safety.

- These men were carrying money they had received from their churches so that they could give it to the impoverished Jerusalem church.
- By Paul sending them on ahead to Troas all together like he does here, he is in effect protecting them because they are a huge target.
- It seems the Holy Spirit had Luke record this detail about their itinerary, so we could see the importance of being together in fellowship.

Hebrews 10:23-25 23 Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful. 24 And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, 25 not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching. NKJV

Ecclesiastes 4:9-12 9 Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their work: 10 If one falls down, his friend can help him up. But pity the man who falls and has no one to help him up! 11 Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm. But how can one keep warm alone? 12 Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves. A cord of three strands is not quickly broken. NIV

Acts 2:42 They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. NIV

5. Be Flexible (Verse 6)

6 But we sailed from Philippi after the Feast of Unleavened Bread, and **five days later joined the others at Troas**, where we stayed seven days.

- v6 They sail from Philippi after the Feast of Unleavened Bread, then five days later join those sent ahead in Troas, then stay for a week.
- Again, notice this detail; it took them five days to get from Philippi to Troas. Why does the Holy Spirit want us to know how long it took?
- I suggest to you that this trip should have only taken about one day, not five. This would indicate that this trip was no “smooth sailing.”

“As the entourage headed for Jerusalem, they sailed from Philippi to Troas in five days. This intrigues me, because in [Act 16:11](#) we read they made the same journey going the other direction in only one day. So, too, sometimes, in our journeying, we experience seasons of smooth sailing. Other times, it's tough going. Some of you may be in rough waters right now. Take heart: It doesn't mean you're out of the Lord's will. Be like Paul, and keep sailing.”

Jon Courson

- Pastor Chuck Smith once said; “blessed are the flexible for they shall not be broken.” In other words, be flexible and keep on a sailing.